

VOL. 4, NO. 5, JUNE 2012



the Inside Scoop...of OJJ

Mission:

The Office of Juvenile Justice protects the public by providing safe and effective individualized services to youth, who will become productive, law-abiding citizens.



Dr. Mary L. Livers, Deputy Secretary

I know you must be weary of hearing about my broken leg, but thought you might get a kick out of seeing what it takes to leave home. Here I am in a rare visit to central office being tended to and pushed by a team – **Lynne Geromini, CQIS; Mitzi Sonnier, CQIS; my assistant Nita Franklin-Shanklin, Paralegal Lisa Patterson and Family Liaison Donna Bowie.** You do not want to see them loading me into the car. Sometimes I just have to get out and the office is the place to be.



Well, we managed to weather the legislative session and as we anticipated, there are big changes in store for the agency. We will stand strong and continue to do whatever it takes to meet the mission. I know where all of you stand, because I read about you and all that you do in the pages of *The Inside Scoop...of OJJ* – you just keep on keeping on and meeting the mission as naturally as breathing. I know that OJJ can count on each and every one of you. It is an honor to serve with every one of you.

So, enjoy this issue of your newsletter and – keep the faith.

“Doc” Dr. Mary L. Livers

The Daily Motivator

Your Highest Level

A little extra effort can buy you a lot of additional options. Instead of always being hindered by what you must do, put yourself in full control of what you can achieve.

A little more self-discipline and initiative can give you a lot more power over your own destiny. By embracing full responsibility for your own actions, you make those actions much more beneficial and effective.

Avoiding that responsibility, and seeking to take the easy way out, will quickly add to your difficulties. Being less than you can be, and doing less than you know you can do, will cause far more pain than any external challenge ever could.

There's a reason why you have a burning desire to matter, to make a real difference in the world. It's an essential part of who you are, of your deepest purpose, to get good and valuable things done.

So use the opportunity of this moment, and of every moment, to live and work and love and enjoy at your highest level. Let your unique value flow forth without holding back.

Live each day with the courage of your own special, beautiful possibilities. Always give your best, for it is your most profound and fulfilling desire to do so.

— Ralph Marston

Blue Heron at Lake Martin. This month's filler shots were taken by central office Administrative Assistant Nykisha Franklin, on a Lake Martin swamp tour.



Staff Spotlight



**Spotlight on...
Warehouse Manager
Daquanta Palmer,
Jetson Center for Youth**

It takes a lot of people with a lot of organizational skills to run a business or facility smoothly and efficiently. Most of us take for granted that everything needed to do our jobs will be there when we need it...and there are generally unseen people working behind the scenes to make sure that supplies are procured and distributed. At Jetson, that person is **Daquanta Palmer**, warehouse manager.

Her duties affect every area of the facility. She orders, stocks and issues every commodity used on campus except medical supplies for CCS and office supplies, which are handled in the administrative area. When new central office staff visit Jetson, they are introduced to Daquanta. She is someone they all need to know.

Daquanta is not invisible – she wears so many hats that she is seen all over campus. Daquanta also operates the youths' canteen service, dispensing snacks and hygiene items that kids can purchase weekly with their personal account funds. When supplies and commodities arrive at the front gate, Daquanta takes delivery. If a package is delivered to Jetson for anyone, youth or staff, Daquanta receives it and routes it to its owner. She is in charge of managing FTCs (flammable, toxic and caustic items) needed on campus. If a vehicle needs to be sent out for service, Daquanta is on top of that. She works visitation on Sundays, meeting parents and families who are visiting their kids, and she works the front gate when needed.

At one point, Daquanta entered Code of Conduct information into the computer system, and she trained to take on other duties after a staff reduction.

"I'm a jack of all trades," Daquanta said, with a smile. "I see everything that comes through the gate, except medical supplies for CCS. I have to know if an item is in stock and if it is appropriate or not."

And if you think that a warehouse manager would not have a lot of contact with the youth, you would be mistaken. She works with Jetson kids often, teaching them to organize items in the warehouse, stocking the dining hall and other areas, and building trusting relationships with them.



"Daquanta Palmer does an outstanding job managing the warehouse at Jetson," said **Director Daron Brown**. "She is very team-oriented and she has an awesome relationship with our staff, and the central office staff. She has a rare ability to get along with everyone. Daquanta believes in working together to get the job done, and she displays a good spirit and a great attitude, no matter what she is asked to do. Daquanta is always willing to go beyond the call of duty and she takes great pride in what she does. The warehouse is in magnificent shape, it is so organized, and she keeps it so clean – I call her the 'sheriff of the warehouse!' That speaks volumes about how well-organized she is. She also displays great leadership ability, and the kids who work with her respect her a lot. Daquanta has been with Jetson since 2003, and I find her to be a wonderful employee who needs minimal

supervision. She is a great person to work with, and she is a real asset to the agency."

"Daquanta has been an absolute pleasure to work with, and our youth, JCY, and OJJ as a whole are very blessed to have her as part of our team," said **Auditor Gay Lynn Brown**.

"I work a lot by myself, and I am not micromanaged by my supervisor (Director Brown)," Daquanta said. "I pace myself to do whatever is needed at the time. I get the paperwork done right away, as I go. I have to know what is needed in the inventory, which vehicles need to be serviced, and the reports tell me what is needed and when."

"Our trip vehicles need to be in perfect shape at all times," she continued. "I make sure they are serviced once a month, unless something happens and a vehicle needs maintenance at once."

"Canteen operation is really big," Daquanta said. "I receive a regular list of kids in each dorm, showing what stage each youth is in. I need to know that so I can make sure the kids are allowed to have certain items. For instance, only kids who are at the transformation level are allowed to purchase radios. I need to know if kids are on canteen restriction for a week, due to a major infraction. Their spending limit is \$4.50 a week, \$4.00 for Fast Track youth."

Youth are allowed to purchase items such as ramen noodles, sweets, chips and hygiene items. They are also allowed to use personal account funds to order certain catalog items, such as shoes. When packages arrive from parents or from a youth's order, Daquanta delivers them to the counselors, who give them to the kids.

Right now, there are two warehouses at Jetson – the main location where the majority of supplies and commodities are stored, and Evergreen, an unused Area 1 dorm, that now houses hurricane supplies. Daquanta manages them both. "For the last couple of years,

central office has ordered all the hurricane supplies for all the facilities,” she noted. “Before then, I ordered the items. Bridge City stores some things, but most of the items come here, because this is where they will be used. This way, they don’t have to pack up as much if they have to evacuate. We have to stock all sorts of things – soap, towels, sheets, mattresses...all the things that are needed for the kids. We make sure they are things that can also be used throughout the year, if we don’t have a storm.”

Daquanta is proficient in a new, computerized system called Wasp Inventory Control. She has traveled to Swanson and Bridge City to teach warehouse staff there how to use an electronic inventory system. **Auditor Gay Lynn Brown** introduced Wasp last year, and put it into place first at Jetson. “We are now able to use scanners or a computer to add, remove, move, and check inventory counts by location, including the cafeterias,” Gay Lynn said. “This system allows the entire agency to use one centralized system to maintain inventory throughout all facilities. People executing purchase orders are now able to readily view the quantity of the needed item already in-house, allowing us to reduce waste and obsolescence. Wasp will also allow us to more easily control the volume of individual items throughout the system and to ensure consistency in processes across facilities.” Ultimately, the Wasp system will save time for employees, reduce waste and assist in asset management, resulting in significant cost savings to the agency.

There is a lot of paperwork involved in warehouse management. Supplies are requested via warehouse withdrawal forms, and old or obsolete materials and clothing must be turned in before new things can be dispensed. Any increase in the amount of supplies being ordered must be approved by the facility director. Deliveries have to be received in the ISIS system or they can’t be paid for, Daquanta said. (ISIS is the Integrated Statewide Information System that controls all financial systems in Louisiana

state government.) In the future, everything will have to be ordered through ISIS, although the 156B system will remain, she noted.



Another major report Daquanta generates is a spoilage report on out-of-date items that need to be removed from the inventory. “Nothing can be thrown away because it’s state property,” Daquanta noted. “Some things can be burned, and some things, like baking powder for instance, have bleach poured on them. We have to make sure that the items can’t be used.”

She keeps up with MSDS (material safety data sheets) that detail the ingredients in specific products and what to do in cases of exposure requiring first aid, etc. Daquanta downloads the MSDS from the internet and keeps them close at hand in binders in case the information is needed quickly. She performs regular updates of the Hazardous Chemical List kept in binders in each dorm, the school, the dining hall, and maintenance area. “Wherever there are caustics, we keep a binder – the infirmary, the laundry, all dorms, and all areas that are open and active,” she said.

Daquanta compiles a quarterly inventory from all areas – in another binder – and she opens every package that arrives at Jetson, even for staff, to make sure that the order is correct. If there is a discrepancy in the amount of the item ordered and the quantity delivered, she contacts the vendor immediately and notes the difference on the packing sheet. She then checks on the

discrepancy later when the commodity is placed in inventory.

“When the Jetson population was much larger, we had to stock for 450-500 kids,” she said. “With a population of about 80, our usage, of course, is way down. We are able to give each youth three outfits of clothes every three months. They receive hygiene items twice a month, and shoes as needed. So, we have to keep enough clothing on hand for each child to have three uniforms at all times.”



“God forbid we have an outbreak of a serious illness on campus,” Daquanta went on. “Then we have to sanitize everything, sheets, pillows, mattresses. And we have to destroy any mattress if we discover contraband stuffed into it.”

For the most part, Daquanta says, she works alone on many of her tasks. “It’s a lot of responsibility, but I love it,” she said.

The Baton Rouge native was raised in California and came back home in 1994 to be close to family. “I returned to Baton Rouge from California at age 17 – what a shock!” Daquanta laughed. “It’s very different here from California. I was my mother’s only child and I was spoiled. I had everything, but I also appreciated the things I had.” She graduated early from Lincoln High School in Los Angeles, before coming home. Back in Baton Rouge, Daquanta worked at grocery stores and in fast food, quickly becoming a supervisor.

In 1996 she went to work for the Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women (LCIW) in St. Gabriel, where she served as a security and control officer. “I always had perfect attendance,” Daquanta said, “but in 2001 I had a baby and I needed more flexibility in my schedule. I began working in the warehouse at LCIW as an accommodation, but then my supervisor transferred to Jetson. She recruited me to work at Jetson too, and it made so much sense – it’s much closer to home.”

“Working with juveniles, after spending time working with adults, was a real eye opener,” Daquanta went on. “It was a good change for me, especially because I have children of my own. I can relate to the kids, and I always keep in mind that these kids could be my child. I can talk with the boys, and they will come in and help me in the warehouse. When they work with me, I can really see a change in some of them.”

“When I see the kids, they often ask ‘can we make canteen Miss Palmer?’ Some of them will come and help me, and they will open up and talk. When you develop a relationship with the kids, and they trust you, they really change their mindset. Some of them come a long way. At first some are very disrespectful. But that changes as we work together. Sometimes I’ll run into a youth who was been released, and they will come over and give me a hug.”

“I work with the kids often, and a lot of them really like to come to the warehouse and help out,” she said. “It lets them get away from the routine for a while. They know they have to behave and they have to listen to me. They know they can’t touch anything in the warehouse, either, unless they are moving something for me. We establish a level of trust – they trust me and I trust them. They know that if they betray that trust, they are not going to be able to come here again.”

“The kids love to help in the warehouse,” Daquanta went on. “They are great at moving heavy boxes and cleaning the

building. Neatness is a big thing in the warehouse, and I teach the kids that they have to have pride in what they do.”

Daquanta’s own three children are 19, 14 and 11 years old. Her oldest daughter, 19, graduated from Scotlandville Magnet High School last year and attends Baton Rouge Community College where she is majoring in criminal justice. She is considering a transfer to ULM to complete her four-year degree. Daquanta’s 14 year old daughter just graduated with honors (in everything) from Scotlandville Middle Magnet School and was nominated for Student of the Year. She is a member of the Beta Club, and will attend Scotlandville HS in the fall. Her 11 year old son is in fifth grade at Crestworth Elementary School and will soon be at Scotlandville Middle School, following in his sisters’ footsteps.

“My son is really into horses, and he knows everything about them,” Daquanta said. “He spends a lot of time with relatives in the Port Hudson area on their farm, where they have lots of animals, and they have a vegetable garden. It’s important to know where food comes from.”

“My kids are what motivate me to get up and come to work every day,” Daquanta said. “I’m just a homebody, and I don’t want to go anywhere that I can’t take them. I am close to my father as well. I like to be at home, and I like to cook big meals for my family.”

Friendly, outgoing and personable, Daquanta is a one-woman shop with a major impact on her facility and indeed, the agency. A visit to the warehouse, and her office, is a study in organizational genius. Her spaces are spotless, but reflect her personal touch, not cold or impersonal.

Who would have ever thought that warehouse management would also be youth-centered as well as business-oriented, and so critical to meeting our mission? Daquanta Palmer has made the job mission-critical, and she exemplifies “meeting the mission” every day.

CQIS POLICY UPDATES

Policies Approved in May:

- A.1.5 Channels of Communication 5/17/12
- A.2.2 Pay Admin. & Management 5/18/12
- A.2.7 Drug-Free Workplace 5/18/12
- A.2.10 Hiring, Reallocation to or Promotion of a Juvenile Justice Specialist 5/5/12
- A.2.11 Employee Assist. Program 5/17/12
- A.2.14 Facility Staffing 5/17/12
- A.2.15 Dress Code – Facility and Community Services 5/10/12
- A.2.23 Position Descriptions 5/4/12
- A.2.27 Selective Service Registration 5/17/12
- A.2.47 Equal Employment Opportunity 5/1/12
- A.2.61 Pre-Employment Health Screening/Physical Examinations for Direct Care Positions 5/17/12
- A.3.11 Financial and Property Loss Prevention Program 5/14/12
- A.5.5 Data Warehouse 5/10/12
- B.2.8 Victory Treatment Unit (VTU) 5/18/12
- B.3.2 Access to and Release of Active and Inactive Youth Records 5/18/12
- B.4.1 Youth Sentence Computation 5/18/12
- C.1.6 Establishment of Facility Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) 5/14/12
- C.1.12 Leisure/Recreation Activities 5/17/12
- C.1.13 Legislative Request/Communication, Media Access & Public Information 5/17/12
- C.2.1 Escapes, Runaways, Apprehensions, and Reporting 5/18/12
- C.2.2 Facility Riot, Significant Disturbance and Hostage Situation 5/14/12
- C.5.6 Juv. Electronic Tracking System (JETS) 5/18/12
- D.2.1 Physical Exams and Essential Functions of P&P Officers/Juvenile 5/18/12

DYS Policies Rescinded:

- 2.1 Physical Exams for P&P Officers 5/18/12
- 2.3 Special Job Req. for P&P/Juv. 5/18/12
- 6.1 Juv. Information & Record Mgt. System 2 (JIRMS2) & Case Mgt. System 5/21/12

Alexandria Regional Office

Congratulations

PPO3 Lori Johnson Mayeux graduated May 19 **with honors**, from McNeese State University, with a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice and Sociology. We are proud of Lori!

RM Johnny Qualls' son, **William Qualls**, recently graduated from Buckeye High School and received the "Ryan Thibodeaux Friendship Award." William plans to attend Northwestern University this fall.

Staff enjoyed banana splits during Employee Appreciation Week. What a nice treat we all enjoyed.

Welcome Aboard

We welcome our new **PPO1, Kristen Hebert**. Kristen has already settled in and is a part of the family.

PPO3 Robert Harris and **PPS Donna Desoto** volunteered to help the American Cancer Society and have become Community Health Advisors.

PPS Donna Desoto volunteered to be "arrested" to raise money for the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

PPCT Instructor Heath Wallace provided PPCT training in June to newly hired staff in Lafayette and Alexandria.



Water hyacinth at Lake Martin. Photo by Nykisha Franklin.

Baton Rouge Regional Office

Congratulations

Employee of the Month

Congratulations to **PPS Wendy Sarner** who was elected **May Employee of the Month**. Wendy is always willing to help others - she exemplifies the saying "there's no "I" in team." Wendy will do whatever it takes to meet the mission of OJJ and get the job done, if that means going on transports, going out in the field or to court, she is there without a complaint. PPS Wendy Sarner, thank you for all your hard work!

Farewell

We bid a bittersweet farewell to **PPO Steven Dukes** this month, who left the agency to pursue another career path. Steven was a valued asset to the Baton Rouge team and he will be truly missed. We wish him the best of luck in his new venture.

Hats Off

Hats off to the graduates of the class of 2012! Many of the staffers here at Baton Rouge OJJ had children who graduated from college, high school and elementary school. We would just like to take the time to send a special shout-out to the kids to congratulate them on their accomplishments. Hats off to all the graduates!

A special congratulation to one of our college grads:

Charlotte K. Bernard, daughter of **PPO Roy McBride**, and a member of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. She graduated summa cum laude from LSU-Shreveport with a dual major in psychology and sociology. Charlotte will go on to pursue a Master's degree in business at UL-Lafayette.

We See You and You're Looking Good!

PPO Naomi Rodney collected money to assist with funeral arrangements for one of the youth on her caseload. Thank you for your caring, Naomi, we see you and you are looking good!

PPO Keelen Robinson assisted a fellow officer from the Lafayette region in fixing a flat tire. He even went to get the tire repaired so the officer could be on time for a mental health conference at the Pennington Biomedical Research Center. Thanks to you for going above the call of duty for a fellow officer, Keelen, we see you and you're looking good!

Happy Birthday

We said happy birthday to **PPO Katina Broden** and **PPS Wendy Sarner**.

Bridge City Center for Youth

BCCY Has a New Treatment Director

New Orleans native **Angela R. Wiggins**, LCSW-BACS, C-SSWS, has joined the BCCY staff as Treatment Director.

Angela holds both a BSW and MSW from Southern University at New Orleans (SUNO). Her other credentials include LCSW – Licensed Clinical Social Worker; LABSWE BACS – Board approved Clinical Supervisor; LAVSWE C-SSWS – Certificate, School Social Work Specialist; NASW C-CTS – Certificate, Childhood Trauma and Stress, SUNO.



Angela comes to BCCY with over 21 years of experience in a variety of social service positions. She is skilled in staff and financial management, program administration, policy development and implementation, problem-focused interventions and engagement of resistant clients. She recently served as the clinic manager of the Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health System (CABHS) through the DHH/Office of Behavioral Health in New Orleans, where she oversaw day-to-day operations of the clinic, monitored contracts, and provided clinical supervision. Also through DHH, Angela held the position of Mental Health Program Director-A with the Jefferson Parish Human Services District, where she provided overall clinical support to the Jefferson Parish Juvenile Drug Court (JDC) Program and the CFS MST team, utilizing the evidence-based Multi Systemic Therapy (MST) Model.

Angela worked for several years in the Orleans Parish schools as a school social worker, municipal court liaison social worker, and special education social worker. She holds the following certifications through the Department of Education: Qualified School Social Worker and Supervisor of Child Welfare and Attendance.

Angela has also worked in corrections in New Orleans (Orleans Parish Prison) with juveniles and adults, and in Swainsboro, Georgia with juvenile females. While in Georgia, she was trained as a facilitator/trainer in the “Keys to Innervations” Curriculum. BRG of Emanuel County was the first juvenile female facility that embraced and implemented a treatment model approach.

Others positions that Angela has held include Assistant Director of Project PASS, at the University of New Orleans. Project Pass is a federally funded Upward Bound Program that assists disabled New Orleans area high school students to prepare for college through programs including classes, tutoring, counseling and enrichment activities.

Instructor and director of a “weed and seed” program at LSUHSC/Dept. of Psychiatry. This collaborative effort between the U.S. Attorney's office and Housing Authority of New Orleans, weeded out crime and seeded into a community prevention/intervention programs.

Instructor and Forensic Social Worker at LSUHSC/Dept. of Psychiatry, housed at Orleans Parish Prison. Angela provided individual and group therapy to juveniles and adults.

She also served as a Grief Therapist at the Children's Bureau with the Project LAST (Loss And Survival Team) program that provides therapeutic services to children and families who are survivors of homicide victims.

School Year Closes

By Christopher Mayes, Instructor

As the school year at Riverside Alternative High comes to a close, teachers and administrators are celebrating a successful year of tests and events, while making plans for the summer. Last month, our high school students participated in “End of Course” testing in math, science and English.

These standardized, computer-based assessments measure our students' growth and preparation for coursework at the next level. Test coordinators and teachers worked diligently to prepare students for testing. Students were cooperative and participated in the week-long endeavor. Testing went extremely well, and we're proud of our students.

Congratulations go out to our testing coordinators, **Trenisha Stanislas** and **Bella Berry**, for their diligent efforts to ensure that testing ran smoothly. We'd also like to thank the **JJS staff** who supported the school's faculty and administrators during this critical testing period. Teachers and staff are

preparing some exciting summer projects for our youth. Our summer school began May 29. In addition to summer school projects, teachers prepared for Riverside's graduation ceremony on June 7. We had eight students who participated in the graduation ceremony, where we honored our GED graduates.

LAMOD Class Holds Graduation

Bridge City Center for Youth celebrated the graduation of its fourth LAMOD Pre-Service class of 2012 on May 25th. The class completed five weeks of intense training in preparation to take their posts on May 28th. The class included 11 Juvenile Justice Specialists, three social services staff, and one group leader.

The **Award of Excellence** for the class was presented to **JJS Henry Bauer** of Destiny Dormitory, who had perfect attendance and maintained an average score of 96.5 on all tests and assignments.



The LAMOD class at their graduation. Pictured from left are Staff Development Specialist Susan Taylor; Katrina Dobbins, Social Services; JJS Louis Evans; Shante Gibson, Social Services; JJSs Nykia Raymond, Anjeanette Cooper, Henry Bauer, Jaleesa Dillon and Albert Toca; Group Leader Keith Joseph; JJSs Yasmene Robinson, Janikian Williams, Cedric Reed and Deiantre Daniels-Jones; Charles Ellis, Social Services; JJS Dominique Darby and Deputy Director Darrell Foster.

Chef Ron Sonnier and the Culinary Arts students hosted the event, and served lemonade, a cake donated for the occasion, as well as assorted sweets prepared by the class.



The gorgeous cake donated for our LAMOD graduation celebration.

Several members of the BCCY family were on hand to offer encouragement and congratulations to the new staff. **Nerissa Cole, LAMOD Coordinator; Charmaine Jones, Compliance Coordinator; Group Leaders Latitia Watts, Walter Chisholm and Denise Gasquet**, as well as **Brad Church of Investigative Services**, and **Torey Dickerson and Sean Jacobs, JJS staff** from Harmony Dormitory, celebrated with the class. **Assistant Director Rickey Wright** welcomed staff to Bridge City ("where we are big enough to be a business, but small enough to be a family!") and **Deputy Director Darrell Foster** offered his usual eloquent words of encouragement, and awarded certificates to the graduates. Congratulations to all of our new staff! In the words of Asst. Director Wright, "Welcome to the family; now, let's get down to business!"



Alligator at Lake Martin. Photo by Nykisha Franklin.

Central Office

CO ACA Audit – 100 Percent



One hundred percent - the score given central office by ACA auditors on its three year re-accreditation audit. We met 138 mandatory and non-mandatory standards, which one of auditors told us is a fairly unusual accomplishment. He also told us the first-ever audit is much easier than re-accreditation audits, where we have to have three full years of files.

ACA Accreditation Manager Angela Arabie quarterbacked the effort with lots of help from the rest of the CQIS team - **Lynne Geromini, Katie Justice, Debbie Linder, Phyllis Martello and Mitzi Sonnier**, with the



assistance of **Belinda Thomas** from Jetson. **Chief of Operations/CQIS Ellyn Toney** kept on top of the effort, and made sure that each and every person at central office knew what they needed to do – and did it. The building looked great, all offices were neat and orderly (no mean feat) and all the safety equipment and files were in order. The auditors checked it all and were suitably impressed, remarking on the passion that our staff everywhere they visited expressed for their jobs and their mission. One more location to go – once Bridge City is accredited, OJJ will be 100 percent! Many thanks to everyone at central office, who pulled together as a team, to accomplish re-accreditation.



ACA Auditors Fred Campbell, Director of Training for A.D.C. Training Academy in Arkansas, and Ida Lewis, Administrator of the Ohio Standards Project, Ohio Department of Youth Services, review files, top, and check safety equipment, below, in an exhaustive audit at central office.



Welcome to our New Food Services Director

We recently welcomed **Zelma Jones**, the newly appointed Food Services Director for OJJ's secure care facilities.

"OJJ is very fortunate to have attracted such a highly qualified person to serve as our Food Services Director," said Dr. Livers. "Zelma brings a fresh pair of eyes and a new perspective to food service in our facilities. I am confident that we will soon see some interesting new ideas put into place, that I think both youth and staff will enjoy and appreciate."

The Gonzales native worked out of state for several years, and when she decided it was time to move back home to be closer to

family, the perfect opportunity presented itself, Zelma said. She is a graduate of Grambling State University, and holds a Bachelor of Science degree in institutional management with an emphasis on dietetics and food production management.

"I bring to the table a combination of hands-on experience in both 'back of the house and front of the house,' " Zelma said.

She has over 20 years of food service management experience including full-service restaurant, campus dining, catering, retail outlets and managing multi-units. She also has extensive knowledge of general nutrition, menu planning and recipe development, staff development and training, and the all-important laws and regulations pertaining to the food service industry.

"I am very passionate about every aspect of food service, from the freshest ingredients and healthy menu planning, through expert preparation and providing a great dining experience," Zelma said.

"One of the best aspects of my job is the opportunity to build faith in nutrition by making a positive impact, creating a dining experience that is both enjoyable and healthy," Zelma continued. "I strongly believe we have the opportunity to impact not only the individuals, but our communities and our state."

When she is not working, Zelma loves to spend time with her son Ryan, and her Shih Tzu, TC (Too Cute). She also enjoys reading, football, cooking, traveling, being outdoors and spending time with family.

"Zelma presented a unique combination of qualifications that made her an excellent candidate for Food Service Director," said DAS/Facilities Sean Hamilton. "I look forward to seeing the innovations she will bring to the tables of our facilities."

Community Service

Family Liaison Donna Bowie was a speaker at Crestworth Learning Academy's recent Annual Career Day Event for 8th grade students, held in May. This year's theme was "Create Your Future; Turn Your Dreams into Reality."

Career Day seeks to broaden the minds of the students to the many career choices available. "School personnel realized that some students lack direction, and were limited in their thinking," Donna said. "They set aside a Career Day to broaden their spectrum and being open to various career options. I enlightened students in the 8th grade about careers within OJJ as well as how important it is to continue their education."



Family Liaison Donna Bowie, left, with Pamela K. Burnett, Crestworth Learning Academy's Career Day Coordinator. Below, Donna addresses the students.



Hammond Regional Office

SUPERSTAR!

PPO2 Jonathan Varnado is the Hammond OJJ Superstar for May. He was recognized by **PPO2 Jamie Oertel** for getting a parent's signature for her.

Welcome

Hammond OJJ staff welcomed two new Transport Officers this month. Welcome aboard, **Tyon Robinson** and **Jennifer West**.

What's Going On...

PPO1 Julie Church reports that a youth on her caseload made the cheerleading team at Northshore High School.

PPO2 Leigh Calmes reports that a youth on her caseload who has been on and off probation since March 2008, has recently earned her GED and is now employed.

Hammond OJJ donated a box of food and clothing to a family of a youth on **PPO3 Kasey Wall's** caseload whose home burned down.

A youth on **PPO2 Jamie Oertel's** caseload, currently at La Maison de Grace, graduated from Iowa High School in May.



Turtles at Lake Martin. Photo by Nykisha Franklin.

Jetson Center for Youth

JCY Teacher Receives National Instructor of the Year Award

Mr. Larry Poor, Small Engine/Horticulture Instructor, at JCY's Scenic Alternative High School, recently was recognized as Instructor of the Year at a national conference by the Equipment and Engine Training Council, Inc. of Oconomowoc, Wisconsin.

Larry was honored at the group's annual conference and awards dinner in Dallas, Texas. He was named the Best of the Best!

Larry was unable to attend this annual event to receive this prestigious award because of ill health. "Upon his return to Scenic Alternative High School, we will extend our congratulations to Mr. Poor for receiving national recognition of his continued efforts toward students' outcomes," said Director Daron Brown. "We are so proud of him, and we also recognize the contribution he makes in providing vocational education to our youth."

JCY Career Day: Your decision, your journey

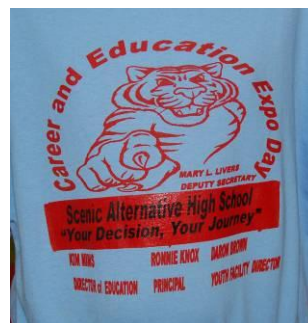


Youth visit with the manager of a local O'Reilly's Auto Parts store, who attended the career expo to share career opportunities with them.

"Your Decision, Your Journey" was the theme of the recent Career and Education Expo Day held in May at Scenic Alternative High School. The Expo was planned as an educational opportunity for students to interact with community businesses and social service organizations.

Each class/dorm was allowed to visit with the vendors and ask questions. Several vendors had brochures and other information to share with the students.

After the vendor visitation was completed, the culinary department prepared lunch and the teaching staff served it, including hot dogs, hamburgers, fries, watermelon and milk or juice. The students enjoyed the meal, they engaged in intramural sports during the afternoon.



Youth participating in the career fair donned t-shirts specially printed for the occasion.

Adrian Skipper, Transition Coordinator, spearheaded the event, and made arrangements with the community members and vendors who set up their booths and visited with the youth.

The gym was attractively decorated with a Hawaiian theme.

Among the Transition Coordinator's responsibilities is to offer opportunities to expose our students to the "world-of-work." This Expo certainly accomplished that mission.

Hats off to Ms. Skipper for a job well-done.

Auto-Auto-Automotive

This is the newest chant at Scenic Alternative High School. An automotive service technician program was initiated recently for our GED students.

Instructor Ronald Frioux completed JCY's official training and began his first class of GED students in the automotive service technician vocational program. Mr. Frioux brings many years of experience in the automotive service industry to this program. His familiarity with the industry will enhance the opportunities for our students to engage in productive employment upon returning to their communities.

Principal Ronnie Knox anticipates many successful outcomes from this latest addition to the school program.

Celebration Held for Youth's ACT Score

Youth Shannon S. took the ACT exam and received an overall composite score of 17. **Principal Ronnie Knox** made him a promise that if he scored in the high teens he would be approved for an escorted visit off campus.

Mr. Knox stood by his promise and the escorted visit was approved by **Director Daron Brown**. Shannon was taken to Sammy's Grill in Zachary for some delicious seafood.

In addition to Mr. Knox, other attendees were **Director Brown, Director of Education Kim Mims, JCY Human Resources Supervisor Gloria Banks** and **Administrative Assistant to the Director, Markeisha Smith**. The group reported that they had a wonderful time and of course, Shannon really enjoyed the meal.

Receiving this reward, as promised, was so special for Shannon.

Lafayette/Opelousas Regional Office

Congratulations

PPO Danielle Bias graduated from McNeese State University with her Bachelors degree in Family and Child Studies/Sociology in May.

Going the Extra Mile Pays Off for OJJ Kids

PPO TaShana Boyd attended the commencement ceremony for **Youth Julia Z.** at her high school. Although Julia's probation ended in February, TaShana continued to check on her and noticed a negative change in Julia's grades. Julia informed TaShana that she was unable to pay for the cap, gown, tassel and diploma cover, which would prevent her from participating in the ceremony.

RM Susan Miller was informed of the situation, and she, in turn, received permission from central office for OJJ to pay for the graduation items. Once it was approved, Julia immediately brought up all of her grades, staying after school to complete assignments, and was on the honor roll once again for the last nine weeks of school.

PPO Jeffry Edwards is supervising a juvenile who has had a lot of problems at home and at school. The school issues decreased after he was placed on probation and there are interventions in place for the family problems.

The youth had been on his school's football team, but was kicked off due to his grades and behavior. Jeffry met with the football coach at the end of the school year to inquire about the youth being allowed to participate in the summer training program in preparation for next season. The coach said that he would think about it and give Jeffry a call. The coach decided to allow the young man to participate in the summer training program and said he would most likely allow him back on the

school's team. The coach thanked Jeffry for his efforts and told him that was the main reason he allowed the youth to be involved with the team again.

Through Jeffry's extra effort, the juvenile will have a pro-social activity to be involved in all summer. The juvenile will also be required to maintain his behavior, grades and attitude during the school year and has willingly agreed to do so in exchange for involvement with the team. Everyone is excited about the change in this youth.

Training Session Held

RM Susan Miller and **PPS Tracy Flores** completed an initial SAVRY training with two social workers from Bridge City Center for Youth and three new probation officers from the Lafayette region. The training was held at the Lafayette Regional Office.

Lake Charles Regional Office

Lake Charles OJJ sent a representative to attend the local Suicide Prevention in Children & Youth (S.P.I.C.Y.) May meeting at the Office of Behavioral Health's Regional Office. The primary focus was to begin planning a Youth Suicide-Prevention walk for Fall 2012.

Case Notes....

Many officers have been creative in court in making the best, most appropriate, most available recommendations for their youth.

PPO Jeff Haley participated in a joint home study with DCFS to advocate for the return to the community for a young man.

Another officer went to court expecting to receive a young lady in custody but managed to convince the assistant district attorney (ADA) and judge to give the youth and her family an opportunity for probation first, with intensive in-home services.

PPO Fred Fontenot has been creative in dealing with a challenging family.

PPO Garrick Chambers completes his mentor home evaluations timely and supplies the Program Specialist with needed information.

PPO Hollie Comeaux continues to invest a great deal of effort into a special case to address the needs of a mentally-ill female youth who has been in custody and on supervision with OJJ.



Thank you to **PPO Alexis Heflin** who demonstrated caring and concern for a resident of the local Transitional Living Program. Alexis attended a high school graduation ceremony as **Gerald M.** (also the all-star player on the high school's football team) earned his diploma from a traditional, accredited, Calcasieu Parish Public School. She attended to show her support after 1.5 years of monthly supervision this youth.

Gerald had an exceptionally high grade point average (GPA) of 3.5. Congratulations to Gerald for all of his achievements, both academic and on the football field.

We See Less of Ourselves in Biggest Loser Competition

PPO Hollie Comeaux initiated a Biggest Loser contest (literally, a "HEALTHY competition") in our office, and another probation officer assisted her to facilitate the contest and record weights.

Lake Charles OJJ staff desire to be more healthy in order to do a better job and to remain healthy enough to do it longer! Nine participants were competing, including all levels of employees.

Some were more motivated than others. And, on May 30, **PPO Garrick Chambers** was announced as our **winner** of the Biggest Loser Competition. And, **PPO Angie Stevens** was our second place winner.

Congratulations, Garrick!

By **PPO Fred Fontenot**

In the Lake Charles OJJ office, we really are tightening our belts. With the nine officers who participated in a local “biggest loser” contest, we lost a **total of 46 pounds** in the month of May. We should all pat ourselves on the back as “losers.”

Garrick Chambers, however, was by far the “biggest loser” with **20** of those pounds, almost **half of the total by himself!**

The contest will continue in the month of June. Can he repeat for a second month or is he the “biggest loser” he can be, already? Time will tell. It’s worth the competition in order to see less of us all, and encourage healthier eating habits.

I will attempt to give Garrick a challenge this month, so if you see me eating something I shouldn’t, feel free to call me a “big winner,” or is it a “big gainer?”

I would like to encourage everyone to give Garrick lots of sweets, sodas and food. No diet stuff either. Make him feel like a winner or gainer!

Garrick, you are not allowed to leave doughnuts or other sweets on my desk. I’m coming for your title, you “big loser.”

Memorial Day Thanks to Staff

Our greatest respect and appreciation went out to the veterans in our office: **Transport Officer Ken Connell** and **PPO Fred Fontenot**. This Memorial Day, we honored them for their service to our country. Thank you.

Congratulations

PPO Angie Stevens was a beautiful Mother of the Bride on May 26 at her daughter's wedding.

Thanks

We appreciated being able to wear jeans to recognize State Employee Appreciation Day.

Juvenile Sex Offender Task Force Meeting Held

Lake Charles OJJ facilitated a recent meeting for the large collaboration comprising our Juvenile Sexual Offender Task Force. The program is referred to as JSOTP, or the Juvenile Sexual Offender Treatment Program, **which was a result of a CSOM (Center for Sexual Offender Management) federal grant**, to implement a replicable model statewide.

This initiative began in 2005-06, and is still going strong and growing today. The Task Force comprises representatives from the Attorney General's Office; three juvenile Court judges; all four residential programs in the Lake Charles area (Boys Village, Methodist Children's Home, Transitional Living Program and Harbour House); several assistant district attorneys from multiple parishes; the Public Defender's Office; OJJ's Legal Department (**General Counsel Martha Morgan** and **Attorney Revettea Woods**); **Dr. Yolanda Crump, OJJ's Sex Offender Treatment Coordinator**; several local police department and Sheriff's Office law enforcement detectives who oversee the sex offender registry; the local parish juvenile probation office; **Terry Lane**, therapist for Think Change Interventions, our out-patient sexual offender treatment counseling service; a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Nurse from Memorial Hospital (rape victim examinations); a school board representative; the Office of Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD); Gulf Coast Social Services and all employees of the Lake Charles OJJ office.



Above and below, the Juvenile Sexual Offender Task Force meets in the Lake Charles office.



Key issues are being explored by some of the greatest minds, including **Alford Pleas**, on Families in Need of Services (FINS) adjudications for youth charged with sexual offenses; poor response to treatment from these kids; Dept. of Motor Vehicles (DMV) photo identification for sex offenders; safety plans and questions such as “should consensual, age-appropriate relationships be forbidden while a youth is in treatment?”; “Juvenile life youth being transitioned to non-secure placement (precedent motions);” and “what are the requirements as an adjudicated sexual offender juvenile ages out of the juvenile system and is still required to register as an adult?”



Lake Martin water hyacinths.

Community Service

PPO Jeff Haley continued his civic contributions through participation in the annual Shriners' clown competition for the Southern States Region. Several states were represented at the May event. During the awards ceremony, it was announced that Jeff was selected as “Best Clown” in the Kids Choice awards, and he also won first place for the multi-balloon competition, by making a very fierce balloon snake!



Monroe Regional Office

PPO2 Steven Pelfrey is proud to report the success of one of his former clients. **Demontrail L.** graduated from high school in May. He graduated with a full athletic/academic scholarship in hand. Demontrail played high school football and in his junior year ranked third in the state in punt returns. His football coach sent out film to various schools. When Dodge City (Kansas) Community College coach **Bob Majeski** saw the film, he called and offered Demontrail a scholarship, which he accepted on the spot and signed the next day. Demontrail says it does not matter that he's never been to Kansas. He is just grateful for the opportunity to continue his education and keep playing football. “I’m humble, but I’m ready,” he said.

Natchitoches Regional Office

Congratulations

Employee of the Month



PPO2 Brenda Sarpy

Staff enjoyed cake and ice cream to celebrate RM Randall Hill's birthday.



Training Events

Field staff participated in the PPCT refresher course taught by **PPO3 Stanley Cook**. Stanley also assisted Shreveport OJJ by serving as instructing for their PPCT course.



Participating in the PPCT refresher course are, front row: Program Specialist Monique LaCour; PPO2 Brenda Sarpy; TO Rachal Martin; PPO Heather Christophe; PPO Deanna Williams; PPO Christopher Wyatt; PPO Ashley Ward Meacham; PPCT Instructor PPO3 Stanley Cook. Back row: PPS Simon Sarpy; PPO Kelvin Jones and PPO Todd Roszell.

PPSs Simon Sarpy and Kristen McComie attended supervisor's training at Louisiana Delta College in Monroe.

SSW5 Nelda Graham provided training on the Parent Empowerment Network (P.E.N.) for parents of OJJ youth at Shreveport OJJ.

Community Involvement

NSU Kids Health Fest

PPOs Heather Christophe, Ashley Ward Meacham and Deanna Williams attended the Kids Health Fest at Northwestern State University.



PPOs Heather Christophe, Brenda Sarpy and Ashley Ward Meacham at the Kids Health Fest.



Heather at the Health Fest.



PPO Heather Christophe and James LaCour, son of Program Specialist Monique LaCour, at the Kids Health Fest.

Staff Participate in Law Enforcement Special Olympics Torch Run

Several members of the staff joined the Natchitoches Parish Sheriff's office in the Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run. Participating were **PPOs Ieisha Beasley, Heather Christophe, Ashley Ward Meacham and Brenda Sarpy.**



From left, PPOs Ashley Ward Meacham, Heather Christophe, Ieisha Beasley and Brenda Sarpy.

The sheriff led the local delegation of law enforcement officers, who received the torch from the north Louisiana delegation and passed it on the officers from Rapides Parish. The run ended in Hammond at Southeastern LA University, where the Special Olympics was held last month. The Law Enforcement Torch Run is the biggest fundraiser for the Special Olympics.



Seated: Heather Christophe, Mario Wise and Michael King. Standing, Ieisha Beasley, Ashley Ward Meacham and Brenda Sarpy.



PPOs Heather Christophe and Ieisha Beasley, passing the torch.



From left, Natchitoches Parish Sheriff's Office employees: (in truck) Sgt. Shepherd, Lt. Armstrong (standing outside truck), Tina Norsworthy, PPO Ashley Ward Meacham, Capt. Turner, PPO Ieisha Beasley and Mary Byers.



Above: Derrick Roque, Natchitoches Police Department; PPO Brenda Sarpy, PPO Heather Christophe and Tina Norsworthy with the Natchitoches Parish Sheriff's Office. Below: Heather Christophe runs past Dep. David Dorsey (in hat) and Dep. David Stevenson.



Congratulations

OJJ Sons Graduate with Distinction



AC3 Wendy Crow's son, Chase Crow, graduated from Lakeview High School. Pictured from left are Kelly Crow, Chase Crow and Wendy Crow.



Wendy's son, Collin Crow, graduated from the Reserve Academy for the Natchitoches Parish Sheriff's Department. Collin received the **Top Shot Award** from the Academy, and he is now a commissioned reserve deputy. Collin is a junior at

Northwestern State University, in the Criminal Justice Program. He works part time as an EMT for the Natchitoches Parish Ambulance Service, the two fire departments in the district, and the Natchitoches Parish Fire Department.

New Orleans/Jefferson Regional Office

PPO Schofield Address Teen Summit

PPO3 Stanley Schofield participated in the River Parishes First Teen Summit hosted by St. John the Baptist Parish 40th Judicial District Children and the Youth Planning Board. At the event, Stanley engaged approximately 500 young people with a motivational message, which was food for thought.

Shreveport Regional Office

Congratulations

Employee of the Month

PPO2 Holly Black

Graduations

PPS Guy May's daughter graduated from Byrd High School, and has a scholarship to ULM.

PPO3 LaTonya Marshall's daughter graduated from Captain Shreve High School. She plans to attend Southern University in Baton Rouge.

Administrative Coordinator 4 Shatina Salter's son graduated from Bossier High School. He will attend Bossier Parish Community College.

Promotions

Congratulations to three of our PPO2s on promotion to PPO3:

Alan Glover, Brandy Graham and Lanita Lars.

Welcome

We welcomed two new PPO1s in May:
Sterling Newsom and Bruce Parsee.

Farewell

We said goodbye to PPO1 Atejia Glover. She received her Master's degree in Family and Consumer Science from Louisiana Tech in Ruston, and now serves as a mentor for Goodwill Industries in Shreveport.

Training Events

PPS Steve Martino, PPS Todd Carlisle and PPS Rick Ladner attended the quarterly supervisor training in Monroe.

PPO3 Todd Carlisle and **PPS Steve Martino** attended the recent gun class at the Caddo Parish Sheriff's Training Academy.

PPS Steve Marino attended and passed the NRA Law Enforcement Handgun/Shotgun Instructor School in May. Steve is training to be a firearms instructor for our office.

PPO3 Todd Carlisle, **PPO3 John Whitlock** and **PPO3 Charles Herrmann** attended firearms classes on Render Safe Procedures and identification in May.

Each month, several **PPOs** travel to Swanson to participate in re-classification staffings for youth housed there.

RM Kristi Martin attended the Caddo Parish Youth Planning Board meeting.

PPO3 Dwain Wilemon recently went on a mission trip to Mexico with his church group.

Youth Success

PPO3 Todd Carlisle supervises youth **Gradin D.**, who was the **Graduate of the Year** of Goodwill Industries of North Louisiana. Goodwill hosted a ceremony to congratulate Gradin, where he met the district manager of Walmart, who was a guest.



Above: PPO Todd Carlisle beams as Gradin displays his plaque. Below, Gradin triumphantly displays his plaque.



Above, Goodwill Industries staff congratulate Gradin, and below, staff from WalMart, at the Goodwill Industries annual banquet.



Happy Birthday

We said happy birthday to **PPO3 Lanita Lars** and **PPO3 Jennifer Hill** in May.



Blue heron at Lake Martin. Photo by Nykisha Franklin.

Swanson Center for Youth

Congratulations Employee of the Month

Deputy Director Nadira Ricks would like to recognize **Social Service Counselor Jatansha Jackson**, for her consistent and outstanding excellence in case management. For three consecutive quarterly treatment audits, she has had multiple perfect files. This represents organization, case file management, meeting deadlines and completing plans and reports in a timely manner. She has been a part of the Fast Track Treatment Team providing youth with intensive treatment that has prepared many youth to return to their communities and become productive in their on-going treatment. She has continued to build healthy relationships with individual youth. Jatansha utilizes the LAMOD group process to address group and individual needs. Due to her outstanding performance, Fast Track youth are receiving the appropriate treatment.

Employee Appreciation Week Celebrated in Style

Swanson staff celebrated Employee Appreciation Week with treats and recognition each day.

We started the week off on Monday with cereal bars, juice and water at the gate.

On Tuesday, the day and evening staff had hamburgers, sausage, homemade baked beans and potato salad.

Wednesday, the out-going night shift enjoyed waffles, sausage and juice.

Thursday was baked goodie day; all staff were treated with homemade baked goods as they were coming and going through the gate. Thanks to all who prepared those delicious sweets!

Friday, staff received fruit, and a certificate for years of service.



Above: Director Vickie Shoecraft and Instructor Mack McLaurin. Below: Deputy Director Nadira Ricks with JJS Stephanie Cockerm.



Above: JJS Dornesia Harris and Deputy Director Germaine Simon. Below: Deputy Director Nadira Ricks, Administrative Coordinator Jacqueline Holmes and Director Vickie Shoecraft.



Social Service Recognition

During a Social Service meeting, treatment staff were recognized for all the hard work they do every day to keep their case files up to par. **Director Vickie Shoecraft** and **Deputy Director Nadira Ricks** presented all social service staff including clerical, with a Certificate of Outstanding Performance.

Tallulah Regional Office

PPO Fred Laing and **PPO Lajuana Harrell** reported that **Youths Coby O.** and **Joshua B.** earned their GEDs at Swanson. Both youth received their diplomas at the Swanson graduation ceremony June 1.

Tallulah OJJ completed several training sessions, policy reviews, and firearms recertification. Below are photos from our range day for firearms recertification.



Tallulah OJJ enjoyed a visit with the staff of the Center for Children and Families, Family Foundations Division, when they visited to discuss the CSoC referral process and their



mentor program. They showed a PowerPoint presentation and shared goodies and novelty games to spread a little fun among the group. **PPO Terri Berry** was crowned Queen for the Day!

Below, our staff with staff from the Family Foundation.



Birthday Wishes

We said happy birthday to **PPO Truett Glass** and **AC4 Patricia Dense**.

Thibodaux Regional Office

Employee of the Month

Congratulations to **PPO Summer Ferreira**, Employee of the Month for June. She is a valuable asset to our team here in Thibodaux.

Thibodaux Office had its 2nd annual crawfish boil in May. We enjoyed eating some really good crawfish and veggies. A huge kudos goes out to all of our cooks and everyone who assisted in making it a successful one as well as those who assisted in making the delicious crawfish stew and potato salad with the leftovers.

PPO Officer Allison Lirette reported:

Youth Joshua D. was awarded a \$1000 scholarship to a college of his choice for his speech, "Life's Challenges," that he presented on Legislative Day at AMIKids Bayou Region.

A huge thanks to **Firearms Instructors James Percle** and **Eddie Fannin**, for conducting our annual firearms training. It was very interesting and well coordinated.



PPOs Sandra Rodrigue and James Percle



The huge crawfish



PPOs Josh Becnel, Tressa Gros, and James Percle preparing all of the goodies to add to the boiling pot.



The crawfish being purged before boiling.



PPO Eddie Fannin fixing to put up our tents.



PPOs Tressa Gros and Summer Ferriera enjoying the beautiful day in Thibodaux.



PPS Robert Duet, boiling the crawfish.



BCCY Culinary Arts & Occupations



Chef Ronald J. Sonnier, CEC Recipe of the Month

Nothing like inviting family and friends over for a big fish fry during the summer months and spending time telling fish stories about how much fun it was to catch the fish. One of my favorite things to do is to make good hush puppies to go along with the fish to enjoy before and with the meal. The recipe in this month's *Inside Scoop* is one of my favorites and real easy to throw together. If you like jalapeno peppers you can substitute them for the bell pepper or use both. The other recipe is something special for the 4th of July to remind everyone about how special that day is.

The students of Culinary Arts have been in the books learning all about serving food safely and were tested in May for the National Managerial ServSafe Certification, which is required by Act 1206 of the 1997 Louisiana Legislature. ServSafe certification, a required credential in most states, can be obtained by restaurant employees, managers and owners through the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation. The test is given on campus at Bridge City. It is the only training and testing program approved for food service workers and managers. The students tested for ServSafe certification were **Isaiah P., Larry W., Elijah N., Jared N., Brandon D. and Warren C.**



When the students receive their certification, they will be able to include it on their resumes'. The certification has certainly opened doors of opportunity in the hospitality business for many students who have it, and are now working at food service jobs across the state. Since it is a nationally recognized testing procedure, it is good for all the other states, except California, where there is a slight difference in the test. But our students should have no problem passing the California test if they were to move there. We are testing seven more students this month, and

I will be sure to pass on the results to everyone. **Pictured from left are Warren C., Jared N., Elijah N. and Brandon D.**

We also planned a graduation ceremony for the eight GED students who passed their examination. Plans were to put on a spectacular ceremony, including a salutatorian breakfast on the morning of the graduation. Each student was allowed to invite family members to the celebration, and there was an after party in the Culinary Arts building. The students who passed their ServSafe certification were also recognized and honored at the graduation ceremony.



Beer and Tomato Hushpuppies

Great with Fried Seafood!

1 ½ cups self-rising yellow cornmeal
¼ cup self-rising flour
⅛ tsp. salt
2 medium onions, finely chopped
1 medium green bell pepper, finely chopped
1 medium tomato, finely chopped

1 large egg, lightly beaten
1 ½ tsp. Worcestershire sauce
½ tsp. Tabasco sauce
½ cup beer (your choice)
vegetable oil for frying

Combine first three ingredients in a large bowl; stir well. Add onion, bell pepper and tomato. Stir in egg, Worcestershire sauce and Tabasco sauce. Add beer, stirring well. Pour oil to a depth of 2 inches into a Dutch oven, and heat to 375°. Carefully drop batter by rounded tablespoonfuls into oil. Fry hush puppies, a few at a time, one to two minutes or until golden, turning only once. Drain well on paper towels. Makes 3½ dozen....serve while hot!



Red, White and Blue Cookies

Makes about 3 dozen

½ cup butter, softened
½ cup packed brown sugar
½ cup white sugar
1 egg
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1 ½ cups all-purpose flour

½ tsp. baking soda
¼ tsp. salt
½ cup white chocolate chips
½ cup dried blueberries
½ cup dried cranberries
½ cup chopped macadamia nuts

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease cookie sheets or line with parchment paper. In a large bowl, cream together the butter and sugars until smooth. Beat in egg and vanilla extract. In another bowl, whisk together the flour, baking soda and salt; add to sugar mixture. Mix in white chocolate chips, blueberries, cranberries and macadamia nuts. Drop by heaping spoonfuls onto cookie sheets, spacing dough two inches apart.

Bake 8-10 minutes or until edges are very lightly browned and centers still look doughy. Let cool slightly.

The Inside Scoop...of OJJ

The Inside Scoop...of OJJ is published monthly to communicate with and about OJJ staff in offices and facilities throughout the state, about agency activities, happenings and items of interest.

The Inside Scoop...of OJJ is produced by the Central Office with input from staff statewide.

...until next month

OJJ Administrative Team

Mary L. Livers, Ph.D, MSW, *Deputy Secretary*
Connie Percell, *Undersecretary*
Gearry Williams, *Deputy Undersecretary*
Carolyn B. Lewis, *Dep. Asst. Secretary, Community Based Services*
Sean C. Hamilton, *Deputy Assistant Secretary, Facilities*
Ellyn Toney, *Chief of Operations*
Karen Stubbs, JD, *Deputy Asst. Secretary, Intergovernmental Relations, Communications & Training*
Donna Bowie, *Family Services*
Annette Arthur, LCSW, BACS, *Director of Treatment*
Jerel M. Giarrusso, APR, *Director of Communications*
Kim B. Mims, *Director of Education*
Martha Morgan, JD, *General Counsel*
Kelly D. Smith, MN, APRN, PHCNS-BS, *Health Services Administrator*
Vanessa Tom, *Director of Information Technology*

Contacts

For more information contact Jerel.Giarrusso@la.gov
225.287.7898

Reporters

Alexandria: Sharon Graham
Baton Rouge: Keondra Riley
Bridge City: Cassandra Washington & Eddie Newsome
Central Office: Jerel Giarrusso
Hammond: Courtney Pegues
Jetson: Daron Brown
Lafayette/Opelousas: Kevin Broussard
Lake Charles: Melissa Cross
Monroe: Gail Wilson
Natchitoches: Rosa Brownlee
New Orleans: Roxann Tuircuit
Shreveport: Brandy Graham
Swanson: Kristi Walker
Tallulah: Martha Hattaway
Thibodaux: Allison Lirette

Intergovernmental Relations, Communications & Training

Karen Stubbs, *Deputy Assistant Secretary*
Donna Bowie, *Family Services*
Jerel Giarrusso, *Director of Communications*
Fran Martin, *Director of Staff Development*